



MAUNDY THURSDAY

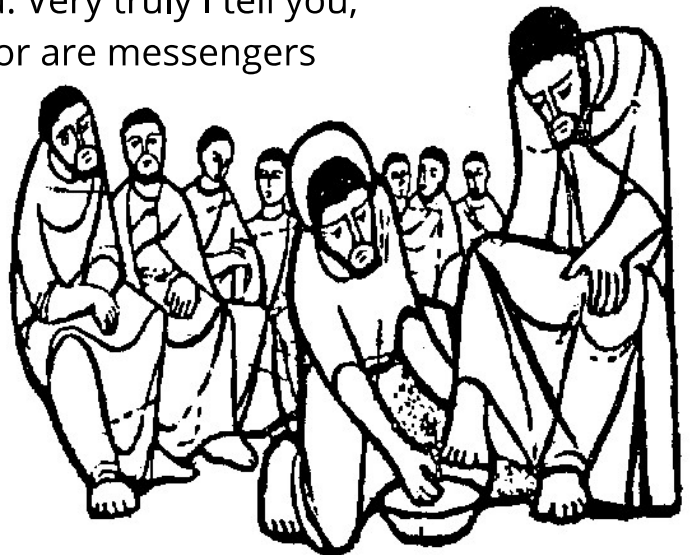
The three holy days at the center of the Christian faith are commemorated with a series of worship services known as Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday. Together they are called the Triduum, and each day tells a part of the story that leads to Easter Morning; each offers us an intimate and significant encounter with Jesus. Maundy Thursday, or Holy Thursday, is the night of The Last Supper, the meal Jesus shared with his friends before he died. For Christians, it is one of the most sacred nights of the year. Maundy is from the Latin word for "command," referring to Jesus' commandment to "Love one another." Jesus demonstrated what it means to love and serve one another by the humble act of washing his disciples' feet. This is also the night Jesus shared bread and wine with his friends, asking them to "Do this in remembrance of me" after his death. Shortly thereafter, Jesus was betrayed and arrested.

READ

Accounts of The Last Supper are found in all four Gospels (Matthew: 26:17–30, Mark 14:12–26, Luke 22:7–39, John: 13:1–17:26). The story of Jesus washing his disciples' feet and the new commandment to "love one another" appears only in the Gospel of John.

John 13: 12-17: After he had washed their feet and had returned to the table, Jesus said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord-- and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example that you also should do as I have done to you. Very truly I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers

greater than the one who sent them. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them. I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."



WONDER

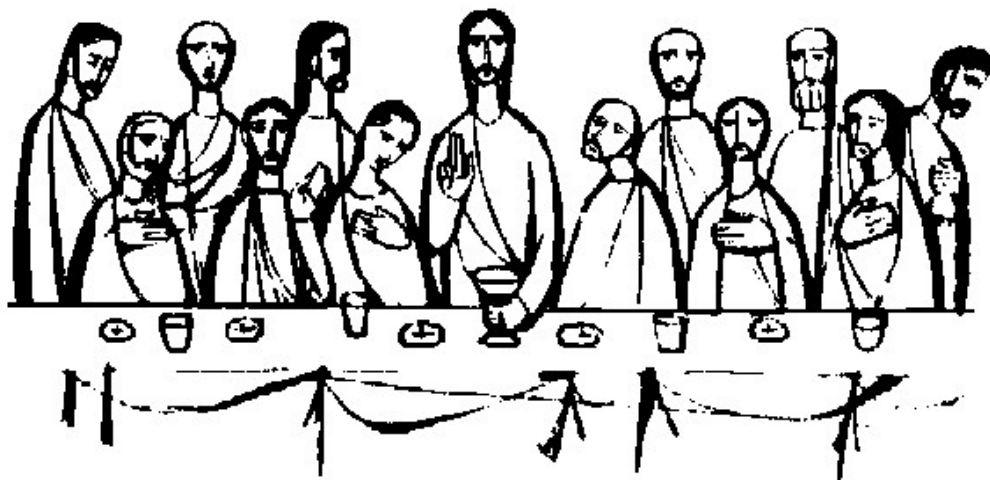
The foot washing and the command to “love one another” both call us into spaces of supreme discomfort. We have many excuses not to participate in the foot washing: it’s embarrassing, it’s too intimate, your socks have holes, you don’t like the person doing it, your toes are weird, you don’t want someone touching you, you don’t have time, that’s just for super religious people. The reasons it is so hard to love one another without condition are much the same: it’s embarrassing, it’s too intimate, you’re imperfect, you don’t even like one another, someone is weird or disagrees with you, you don’t have time. Living into this commandment is a lifelong challenge and practice. Practice at home by washing a loved one’s feet and allowing them to wash your feet. Or soak your own feet in a basin of warm water. Imagine what it would feel like to have Jesus wash your feet. Imagine what it would be like to truly love one another, as if love were an action, not a feeling.

“Engaging All Ages,” Planning for Rites & Rituals: Year A, Church Publishing 2019, p. 150, adapted.

PRAY

Eternal God, by your Word and Spirit, you have given us a new commandment: to love and serve one another in Jesus’ name. Let the good news of your liberating love be sealed in our hearts and shown in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Book of Common Worship, Westminster John Knox Press, 2018, p. 278.



Created by The Rev. Jennifer McNally, priest at Saint Anne's Episcopal Church and convener of dinner church Table 229, St. Paul, Minnesota, and The Rev. Anna V. Ostenson Moore, Associate for Family Ministry at St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral, Minneapolis, and author of the picture books "Today Is a Baptism Day" and "We Gather at This Table." Please share freely!